

Coast Guard Concludes 21 Years of Maritime Security Detachments to Gitmo



GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba (Feb. 4)—Patrolling the waters of Guantanamo Bay are members of Port Security Unit 305 from Fort Eustis, Va. PSU 305 deployed to the Cuba in late January in support of the global war on terrorism. USCG photo by PA3 Krystyna Johnson

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Coast Guard has closed its maritime security detachment in Guantanamo Bay (Gitmo), Cuba, concluding a 21-year presence of port security units that provided security to the naval base, the longest continuous deployment of the Coast Guard Reserve in its history.

As noted in a June 13 message from the Coast Guard commandant, the Maritime Security Detachment cased its colors that date.

Port Security Unit (PSU) 305, which provided the last detachment, also was the first to staff the Maritime Security Detachment in 2002, when prisoners seized by U.S. forces during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and elsewhere were imprisoned at Gitmo.

“Since 2002, the Coast Guard has safeguarded critical assets and infrastructure for Joint Task Force Guantanamo in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM,” the message said. “Through countless hours of rigorous training, relentless vigilance, and steadfast resilience, Coast Guard Port Security Units and Maritime Safety and Security Teams have upheld the highest standards of professionalism while executing this vital mission.”

PSU 305 returned to Virginia on June 14 after its nine-month deployment, which was the unit's fifth such deployment over the 21 years.

With the closure of the detachment. Responsibility for maritime anti-terrorism/force protection of Gitmo was transferred to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, the message said.